

GRAFFITI FACTS



Q: What is graffiti vandalism?

A: Graffiti vandalism is a form of expression that includes symbols, nicknames, or pictures painted on walls, fences, or signs. The graffiti is drawn without the permission of the property owner and is used by the vandal as a means of gaining recognition.

Q: What effect does graffiti have on your neighborhood?

A: Graffiti decreases property values and is a visible lack of respect for other people's property. Graffiti attracts more graffiti, as well as criminal element.

Q: Are all styles of graffiti illegal and what is the punishment for graffiti vandalism?

A: Yes, all graffiti is illegal in Miami-Dade County. If convicted, the vandal will be fined, may face jail time, may have to pay restitution, and will have to complete community service hours. Parents of offenders may be liable for damages.

Q: How can I prevent graffiti from taking over my neighborhood?

A: The best way to deter graffiti is to eliminate it as soon as it appears. You can also help fight graffiti by becoming involved in your neighborhood crime watch and reporting graffiti to your local police.

Q: How do I report graffiti on signs, buildings, concrete poles, fences, walls, or other items in my neighborhood?

A: To report graffiti in your neighborhood, please call the Miami-Dade Answer Center at (305) **468-5900**; they will contact your neighborhood Team Metro office so that an inspector can issue a warning notice to the property owner. If your property has been vandalized with graffiti, call the Miami-Dade County Police Department's non-emergency phone number at **(305) 476-5423 (4-POLICE)** to report the incident.

Q: Are there rewards given for information that leads to the apprehension of a graffiti offender?

A: Tipsters whose information leads to the arrest of graffiti vandals may be eligible for a reward. The public can call Crime Stoppers at **(305) 471-TIPS (8477)** to provide an anonymous tip.



Q: What should I do if I witness someone in the act of defacing property with graffiti?

A: For your own personal safety, do not approach the graffiti vandal. Simply call the Miami-Dade Police Department's non-emergency number, **(305) 476-5423 (4-POLICE)**, to report the incident. In addition, you can also call the Crime Stoppers at **471-TIPS (8477)**.

Q: How can I protect my property from graffiti?

A: The best way to prevent graffiti is to plant vines or shrubs on the wall or structure that permanently covers it, as well as beautifies the area. Other alternatives are to use surface coatings, graffiti removal products, or simply paint over the graffiti.

Q: What vines or plants can I use to prevent my property from being a target of graffiti?

A: Pumila, Bougainvillea Flowers, Thunbergai, Stephanotis, and Allemande grow rather quickly and adhere to wall and fences. Covered surfaces prevent the graffiti vandal's access to the wall or fence.

Q: How can I volunteer for graffiti paint-outs to help keep my neighborhood graffiti free?

A: To volunteer for a graffiti paint-out, please call the Miami-Dade Answer Center at **(305) 468-5900**. They will direct you to your area Team Metro regional office, which will assist in organizing your event.

Q: What is my responsibility as a homeowner?

A: As a property owner, you are responsible for maintaining your property graffiti free. Failure to do so will result in the issuance of a 14-day warning notice and a \$50 fine if the graffiti is not removed.

Q: Are businesses required to maintain their property graffiti free?

A: Business owners are also required to maintain their property graffiti free. A two-day warning notice requesting removal is issued when graffiti is observed on commercial property. Failure to remove the graffiti will result in a \$250 ticket.

Q: What are other responsibilities of business owners?

A: Business owners that sell spray paint or wide-tip markers, must display signs advising the public that graffiti vandalism is a crime, as well as another sign stating that it is illegal to sell spray paint or wide-tip markers to minors. Failure to display the signs results in the issuance of an immediate \$100 ticket. In addition, businesses are also required to stock spray paint in the direct eyesight of the cashier or in a locked display. Failure to abide by these rules will result in the issuance of a \$100 ticket for a first offense and a \$200 ticket for subsequent offenses.

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